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PROMPTLY AND NEATLY EXECUTED.

THIS STORY TELLER.

From the Transcript.

THE APPRENTICE.

BY FRANK WILLOW.

It was at the close of a warm, sultry day in

the latter part of the summer of '39, that I was

traveling in the western part of New York, and

as I urged my jaded beast along, towards a neat

white cottage situated a short distance from the

main road, my thoughts reverted to my cottage

home in the Pine Tree State and I mentally

wished that my reception would be as warm here

as I knew it to be there. In a few moments I

had dismounted, and on rapping at the door, it

was opened by a hale, hearty looking man, in

answer to my enquiry if he could entertain a stranger for

the night, bade me walk in, saying that his son

would see that my horse was cared for.

I followed my host to a neat looking parlor,

where he introduced me to his lady. I found

my entertainer a very agreeable man, and before

an hour had elapsed I was on a good terms with

him as though we had been intimate for years.

In the course of the evening the daily papers

were brought in, and glancing them over I ob-

served my host start, and paleness overspread

his countenance. I inquired if he saw anything

in the paper to cause his agitation?

"It was the death of the man with whom I

served an apprenticeship, or at least part of one,

as I left him before the time had expired that I

was to serve and, as the story may not be un-

interesting to you, I will relate it. It may serve

to while away an hour or so.

"I replied that I should be quite happy to hear

anything that related to his former life, and he

continued:

"I was born in the Granite State, and labored

on a farm until I had attained my sixteenth

year, when my father thinking it would benefit

me, bound me as an apprentice to a man who

lived a neighboring town. I remember well the

day I left home, where I had always been treated

with kindness. The sad parting with my

mother, whom I had always loved with a feel-

ing akin to idolatry, is as plain to me now as

though it were but yesterday, and I assure you,

it was with a saddened heart that I jumped in-

to the carriage that was to convey me to my new

home.

After a journey of some twenty miles, the

carriage stopped before a large two story house,

with an ell part about a story and a half. There

was a somber appearance about the premises

that I thought betokened no good; not that it

was perfectly neat, and everything in good or-

der but there was something that I could not

very well define, that struck me with awe, and

it was with a feeling of reverence that I followed

my father into the house. There I was introduced

to my new master, or in other words, I was

placed for him to scowl at, for the space of

half an hour. He was about the common

within me, and I wept like a child. I had some

curiosity to see my fellow apprentices, and ob-

serve how they enjoyed the comforts that were

dealt out with no sparing hand. At last, how-

ever, tired nature asserted her claims, and in

spite of hunger, I fell asleep.

It was a bright morning when I awoke and

the sun was pouring his golden beams into the

small apartment where I had passed the night.

In consequence of the fatigue I had undergone

the day previous, I had slept later than usual,

but I had a dim recollection of hearing a sound

like the ringing of a bell. A good prospect,

thought I, for a meal, as it was full an hour since

I heard the summons. I descended to the kitchen.

The servant who had shown me to my

room the night previous, and a large dog of the

wolf species, were the only occupants. The

servant turned as I entered and exclaimed—

"Ah! my little gentleman; master has been

here after you, and made a great fuss because

you were not up. He will learn you better

tricks, I'll warrant, than to spend your time in

bed. However, be left word for you, as soon as

you saw fit to rise, to come to him.

"But my good woman; I have had no break-

fast yet," I said.

"Were you here when the bell rang, you

would have had some, but it is too late now;

said she, with a chuckling laugh.

"But I have tasted nothing since yesterday

morning."

"You will have a better appetite for your din-

ner then."

I saw that expostulation was in vain, and left

the room, with the dog close to my heels, until

called back by the servant. I had thought, the

night before, that I would leave, but now I came

to a different conclusion. I determined to re-

main and brave it out. Besides I liked the ex-

citement of my new abode. My master received

me with his habitual scowl, which I returned

with a bow, and a free, "Good morning, sir."

Not desisting to answer me, he motioned me to

a seat, and placed before me a piece of work,

which he condescended to inform me would be

my labor for the day, and then left the room.

After he had gone, I glanced around the room

to see my shopmates. There were five of them

two journeymen and three apprentices. There

was nothing in their appearance to excite any

thing more than one glance, except one, a lad

about a year my senior, who had as merry a

countenance as one would wish to see. Good

humor sparkled in every look, and I resolved to

effuse my acquaintance. The others carried

in their countenance a stolid look, that I could

not comprehend. Strict silence reigned, at least

so far as conversation was concerned. As I busied

myself with my work, I commenced humm-

ing a tune. So intent was I, that I did not

notice my master's entrance, until a touch on

my shoulder caused me to look up. He was

bending over me, holding in his hand the paper

he had given me the night before. He enquir-

ed if I had pursued it; I replied that I had mer-

ely glanced it over.

"Then read it again," said he, and pointing to

a paragraph where we were strictly forbidden

to make any unnecessary noise, he turned his

heel and left the room. This was a damper

for me, and accented for the silence that

reigned in the room. When the bell rung for

dinner I was amused to witness the scurrying

for the house by the apprentices, except myself

and the lad I mentioned. During the walk, I

learned his name, which was James Lee. He was

bound to his present master by the overages of

the poor. At the age of eight years he lost his

parents, and was thus thrown helpless on the

world. He had been thus two years, during

which time he had suffered continually from the

more than a walk by moonlight, when all nature

seemed hushed in stillness and repose. The

evening passed away in silence, and fatigued

and heart-sick, I sought our common room, at an

early hour. There was nothing in it conven-

ient, either for reading or writing, of both of

which I was very fond. Its furniture consisted

merely of two chests, belonging to the lodgers,

which served for seats and two beds. It was in

the second story, on the end, one window being

directly over the ell part. It was midsummer,

and as the full moon poured its gentle beams in-

to the room, I longed for a walk on the banks of

the river. The weather was oppressively warm,

and when the deep breathing of my companions

assured me that they were asleep, I arose threw

open the shut and drawing one of the chests to

the open window, seated myself on it and inhaled

the pure air. In a few minutes James was

at my side, and long we enjoyed the delightful

scene that was presented to our view. A far off

Mount Washington reared his proud head, which

could be dimly seen in the moonlight; nearer

we could discern the tall steeple of the neigh-

boring church; nearer still, the lovely river scen-

ery, now rendered doubly lovely by the bewitch-

ing moonlight. Strange thought I, that my mas-

ter sees no loveliness in a scene like this, but

wishes to deprive another from enjoying it. Little

did I then know the villain I had to serve,

nor what means he would use to accomplish his

ends. But I will not anticipate. We remained

gazing on the lovely prospect until the clock told

the hour of eleven, and then retired to rest.

Time, that soother of all sorrows, had hurried

me on through two years of my apprenticeship,

yet still I remained at the same place, with about

the same comforts that I had before enjoyed.—

My master continued as strict as ever, and many

times the petty insults that I was obliged to en-

dure. I had endeavored to obey him in all his

whims, but all to no purpose. My friend Lee

shared in his good will, as well as myself. But

an incident occurred about this time that chang-

ed the whole current of my affairs. One Sab-

both, at church, I noticed two strangers: The

elder was a lady about fifty years of age, dress-

ed in widow's weeds. The other, a girl about

sixteen. How shall I describe her? Suffice it

to say, that she was lovely, and as I afterward

found possessed of those charms of mind that

render a woman doubly lovely. After meeting

was over, I learned from an acquaintance that

it was the widow Waters, and her daughter, and

that they rented the white cottage that had

pleased me so much during my first walks on

the banks of the river. It did not require a long

time for me to form an acquaintance with the

widow and her beautiful daughter, and in a short

time I had learned their story. Mrs. Waters

was the widow of a merchant, and had retired

to this place to spend the remainder of her days

in peace. My visits to the white cottage in-

creased to such a degree that my master forbade

my crossing the river, unless he was with me.—

This I thought was trampling on my rights a

little too much, and I still continued my visits

though by stealth. Many were the walks I en-

joyed on the river's bank, in company with Mary

Waters, while my master thought I was safe in

the house. It was the first thing in which I had

deceived him, but his treatment of late, had be-

come so unbearable that I cared little whether

he liked it or not. At the close of my rambles

I always found James ready to be my porter

with a good humored laugh, as he reminded me

of the fable of the lamb that strayed while the

shepherd slept.

But matters could not always go thus peace-

fully along. One Christmas eve, there was a

gathering of young folks at a village, about five

miles off, and I had set my mind on being there,

well directed kick from James, he was sent dan-

cing off from the roof. We then entered our

sleeping room, and were soon safe in bed. Now

or shall I forget the look of baffled rage that my

master gave me when he saw me beyond his

reach. But contrary to my expectations he did

not disturb me any more that night. I thought

this looked rather ominous, as my master was

not in the habit of forgiving me so rapidly. I

determined this should be the last night I would

rest under his roof. Therefore, rising in the

morning, I packed up a small bundle, and bid-

ding my friend James all affectionate adieu, I

walked down stairs. When I reached the bot-

tom, I saw my master with a cowhide in his hand,

prepared to give me a flogging. My blood was

up at this sight, and as he struck me a smart

blow across the shoulder, I dropped my bundle,

and seizing him by the hair, flung a blow be-

hind his ear so effectively that he staggered and

fell.

Picking up my bundle I hastily left the house,

but had proceeded but a short distance, when I

saw the dog coming at full speed after me.—

Picking up a stone and throwing it at him, I laid

him sprawling like his master; I then went di-

rectly to the White Cottage, where I had a short

interview with Mary. I did not inform her of

the real state of things but merely told her that

circumstances compelled me to leave, and prom-

ising to correspond frequently, we parted. From

there I went home. Not having seen my friend

since the commencement of my apprenticeship,

she, you can imagine the joyful meeting. My

father informed me that he had called several

times at my master's, but was always told that

I was absent. After remaining at home about a

week, I started for this State, where I wish to

obtain employment satisfactory to my wishes.—

I had written several times to Mary, but had re-

